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| **Job Description** |
| **Post title** | Planning Officer |
| **JE Reference No** | A6245 |
| **Grade** | 9 |
| **Service** | Regeneration, Economy & Growth |
| **Service Area** | Development & Housing – Planning Development |
| **Reporting to** | Principal Planning Officer |
| **Location** | Your normal place of work will be County Hall, Durham but you may be required to work at any Council workplace within County Durham. |
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| **DBS** | This post **is not** subject to a disclosure. |
| **Flexitime** | This post **is** eligible for flexitime. |
| **Politically restricted** | This post **is not** designated as a politically restricted post in accordance with the requirements of Section 1(5) of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and by regulations made from time to time by the Secretary of State. |

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| **Description of role** |

The Planning Officer will form part of a busy area-based development management team and will play a key role in ensuring the effective delivery of the statutory processes.

The post holder will help to ensure that the service effectively engages with its customers, including the general public, communities, applicants, stakeholders and the development industry in the planning service; and this may include attending community consultation events and Town and Parish meetings as appropriate to support senior officers and management.

The post holder will deal with a case load of planning applications and related planning matters including some of a major or contentious nature and may be expected to attend Council meetings, including Planning Committee meetings to support senior officers or managers in their presentation of reports in relation to planning matters.

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| **Duties and responsibilities** |

To undertake other duties and responsibilities that are commensurate with the level of the post. This job description contains the main accountabilities of the post and does not describe in detail all the duties required.

Listed below are the responsibilities this role will be primarily responsible for:

* To process a wide range of planning applications, including some of a major or contentious nature, through the preparation of written reports, in accordance with Council policies, relevant Government legislation and guidance, as well as other appropriate policies and planning considerations.

# To prepare and present Planning Appeal Statements for the Authority and represent the Council at subsequent hearing as required.

# To assist senior officers in presenting the Council’s case at Inquiries.

# The provision of technical advice and guidance to potential Developers, Members of the Council and the general public.

# The provision of professional advice and guidance to potential Developers, Members of the Council and the general public and to carry out negotiations with applicants ensuring that Council policy and practices with regard to pre-application enquiries, including those relating to performance management, are adhered to.

# To undertake enforcement investigations relating to non-compliance with planning conditions and breaches of planning control.

# To support senior officers by attending public exhibitions, meetings, including with community groups, Town and Parish Council’s and the AAP for a locality to advise communities on planning issues.

# To adhere to corporate and planning performance standards and targets.

# The above is not exhaustive and the post holder will be expected to undertake any duties which may reasonably fall within the level of responsibility and the competence of the post as directed by the Principal Planning Officer.

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| **Organisational responsibilities** |

* **Values and behaviours**

To demonstrate and be a role model for the council’s values and behaviours to promote and encourage positive behaviours, enhancing the quality and integrity of the services we provide.

* **Smarter working, transformation and design principles**

To seek new and innovative ideas to work smarter, irrespective of job role, and to be creative, innovative and empowered. Understand the operational impact of transformational change and service design principles to support new ways of working and to meet customer needs.

* **Communication**

To communicate effectively with our customers, managers, peers and partners and to work collaboratively to provide the best possible public service. Communication between teams, services and partner organisations is imperative in providing the best possible service to our public.

* **Health, Safety and Wellbeing**

To take responsibility for health, safety and wellbeing in accordance with the council’s Health and Safety policy and procedures.

* **Equality and diversity**

To promote a society that gives everyone an equal chance to learn, work and live, free from discrimination and prejudice and ensure our commitment is put into practice. All employees are responsible for eliminating unfair and unlawful discrimination in everything that they do.

* **Confidentiality**

To work in a way that does not divulge personal and/or confidential information and follow the council’s policies and procedures in relation to data protection and security of information.

* **Climate Change**

To contribute to our corporate responsibility in relation to climate change by considering and limiting the carbon impact of activities during the course of your work, wherever possible.

* **Performance management**

To promote a culture whereby performance management is ingrained and the highest of standards and performance are achieved by all. Contribute to the council’s Performance and Development Review processes to ensure continuous learning and improvement and to increase organisational performance.

* **Quality assurance (for applicable posts)**

To set, monitor and evaluate standards at individual, team and service level so that the highest standards of service are delivered and maintained. Use data, where appropriate, to enhance the quality of service provision and support decision making processes.

* **Management and leadership (for applicable posts)**

To provide vision and leadership to inspire and empower all employees so they can reach their full potential and contribute to the council’s values and behaviours. Managers and leaders must engage in personal development to ensure they are equipped to lead transformational change; always searching for better ways to do things differently to meet organisational changes and service priorities.

* **Financial management (for applicable posts)**

To manage a designated budget, ensuring that the service achieves value for money in all circumstances through the monitoring of expenditure and the early identification of any financial irregularity.

*The above is not exhaustive and the post holder will be expected to undertake any duties which may reasonably fall within the level of responsibility and the competence of the post as directed by your manager.*

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| Person specification |
|  | Essential | Desirable |
| Qualifications | * Educated to Degree level or equivalent in a relevant town planning qualification or significant recent experience of development control services including processing of planning enquiries, planning applications and related matters
 | * Working towards eligibility for Professional qualification (RTPI).
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| Experience | * Recent experience of development control and planning enforcement services.
* Experience of preparing documentation on behalf of the Authority as part of the planning appeal process.
* Experience of advising senior officers on development control and enforcement issues.
 | * Experience of relationship between planning services and the corporate framework.
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| Skills & Knowledge | * Up to date knowledge of all planning legislation and process/procedures relevant to discipline.
* Knowledge of relevant national, regional and local planning policy pertinent to planning discipline.
* Effective interpersonal skills, including the ability to communicate effectively, both orally and in writing, with a wide range of people from different backgrounds.
* Ability to demonstrate customer orientated approach to development control and enforcement service delivery.
* Ability to establish stakeholder relationships and to communicate effectively with a wide range of partners; including other Officers of similar disciplines both from within the Authority and external.
* Ability to recognise key issues, identify problems and find, and implement, solutions.
* Familiarity with and ability to use relevant ICT infrastructure.
* Knowledge of service planning issues relating to development control and enforcement including national and local performance framework.
* Knowledge of community engagement and customer first approach to service delivery
* Range of communication skills, including listening, presenting information, facilitating group discussions and giving effective feedback in one-to-ones.
* Ability to demonstrate a can do and pragmatic approach to service delivery.
 | * Working knowledge of wider national and local planning policy framework.
* Knowledge of statutory process relating to other related disciplines.
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| Personal Qualities | * Out-going personality with enthusiasm and self-motivation.
* Ability to show determination to achieve results; to see complex projects through to completion.
* Willingness/ability to work on own initiative and/or as part of a team, maintaining high levels of integrity and discretion.
* Positive and can-do approach to service delivery.
* Willingness to undertake flexible working arrangements to meet service and project requirements.
* Persevering and problem-solving approach.
* Access to a car or means of mobility support (if driving then must have a current valid driving licence and appropriate insurance).
 | * Ability to understand corporate implications of decision-making process.
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